



For Release: Thursday, November 12, 2020

20-2124-SAN

WESTERN INFORMATION OFFICE: San Francisco, Calif.

Technical information: (415) 625-2270 BLSinfoSF@bls.gov www.bls.gov/regions/west

Media contact: (415) 625-2270

Consumer Price Index, Anchorage area – October 2020

Area prices were up 0.6 percent over the past two months, up 0.3 percent from a year ago

Prices in the Anchorage area, as measured by the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U), increased 0.6 percent for the two months ending in October 2020, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Richard Holden noted that the October increase was influenced by higher prices for electricity and apparel. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, bi-monthly changes may reflect seasonal influences.)

Over the last 12 months, the CPI-U increased 0.3 percent. Food prices rose 5.8 percent. The index for all items less food and energy increased 0.3 percent over the year. Energy prices decreased 9.8 percent, largely the result of a decrease in the price of gasoline. (See [table 1.](#))

Food

Food prices inched down 0.2 percent for the two months ending in October. (See [table 1.](#)) Prices for food away from home decreased 0.6 percent, while prices for food at home were unchanged for the same period.

Over the year, food prices rose 5.8 percent. Prices for food at home rose 8.9 percent, led by higher prices for meats, poultry, fish, and eggs (15.7 percent). Prices for food away from home rose 1.1 percent since a year ago.

Energy

The energy index rose 2.9 percent for the two months ending in October. The increase was mainly due to higher prices for electricity (9.1 percent). Prices for gasoline advanced 0.4 percent, while prices for natural gas service were unchanged for the same period.

Energy prices decreased 9.8 percent over the year, largely due to lower prices for gasoline (-19.0 percent). Prices for natural gas service declined 1.7 percent, and prices paid for electricity edged down 0.2 percent during the past year.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy advanced 0.6 percent in the latest two-month period. Higher prices for apparel (4.6 percent) and used cars and trucks (3.5 percent) were partially offset by lower prices for medical care (-1.2 percent) and recreation (-0.5 percent).

Over the year, the index for all items less food and energy increased 0.3 percent. Components contributing to the increase included used cars and trucks (11.1 percent), household furnishings and operations (6.8 percent), and medical care (6.0 percent). Partly offsetting the increases were price decreases in apparel (-6.3 percent) and recreation (-3.6 percent).

The December 2020 Consumer Price Index for the Anchorage area is scheduled to be released on January 13, 2021.

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic Impact on October 2020 Consumer Price Index Data

Data collection by personal visit for the Consumer Price Index (CPI) program has been suspended since March 16, 2020. When possible, data normally collected by personal visit were collected either online or by phone. Additionally, data collection in October was affected by the temporary closing or limited operations of certain types of establishments. These factors resulted in an increase in the number of prices considered temporarily unavailable and imputed.

While the CPI program attempted to collect as much data as possible, many indexes are based on smaller amounts of collected prices than usual, and a small number of indexes that are normally published were not published this month. Additional information is available at <https://www.bls.gov/covid19/effects-of-covid-19-pandemic-on-consumer-price-index.htm>.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 89 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 28 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 87 urban areas across the country from about 6,000 housing units and approximately 24,000 retail establishments--department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the *BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index*, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/homch17_a.htm.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.

The Urban Alaska area covered in this release consists of Anchorage and Matanuska-Susitna Borough in the State of Alaska.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 1-800-877-8339.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Urban Alaska (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020	Oct. 2020	Oct. 2019	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020
Expenditure category						
All items	226.984	-	228.343	0.3	0.6	-
All items (1967=100)	605.851	-	609.478	-	-	-
Food and beverages	227.530	-	227.611	5.0	0.0	-
Food	235.739	-	235.252	5.8	-0.2	-
Food at home	233.463	236.145	233.482	8.9	0.0	-1.1
Cereals and bakery products	246.746	-	242.020	6.2	-1.9	-
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs	231.294	-	226.894	15.7	-1.9	-
Dairy and related products	222.320	-	225.591	7.0	1.5	-
Fruits and vegetables	348.073	-	362.039	7.0	4.0	-
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials(1)	151.837	-	146.520	-1.8	-3.5	-
Other food at home	193.789	-	195.565	11.7	0.9	-
Food away from home	236.425	-	235.106	1.1	-0.6	-
Alcoholic beverages	150.090	-	154.538	-3.1	3.0	-
Housing	205.257	-	206.385	0.2	0.5	-
Shelter	203.582	203.338	203.548	-0.5	0.0	0.1
Rent of primary residence(2)	199.719	200.141	200.833	0.5	0.6	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(2)	204.530	204.843	205.368	-0.3	0.4	0.3
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(2)	204.530	204.843	205.368	-0.3	0.4	0.3
Fuels and utilities	346.614	-	359.786	-0.2	3.8	-
Household energy	358.352	358.352	375.871	-0.9	4.9	4.9
Energy services	399.240	399.240	419.074	-0.9	5.0	5.0
Electricity	341.708	341.708	372.819	-0.2	9.1	9.1
Utility (piped) gas service	474.924	474.924	474.924	-1.7	0.0	0.0
Household furnishings and operations	135.752	-	137.416	6.8	1.2	-
Apparel	139.575	-	145.995	-6.3	4.6	-
Transportation	212.223	-	216.914	-3.6	2.2	-
Private transportation	221.047	-	226.202	-3.9	2.3	-
New and used motor vehicles(3)	-	-	113.833	-	-	-
New vehicles(1)	-	-	259.400	-	-	-
Used cars and trucks(1)	278.455	-	288.199	11.1	3.5	-
Motor fuel	198.154	199.525	198.875	-19.3	0.4	-0.3
Gasoline (all types)	199.539	200.972	200.372	-19.0	0.4	-0.3
Gasoline, unleaded regular(4)	191.248	192.640	192.051	-19.4	0.4	-0.3
Gasoline, unleaded midgrade(4)(5)	194.010	195.826	195.275	-18.1	0.7	-0.3
Gasoline, unleaded premium(4)	209.503	210.798	210.248	-17.3	0.4	-0.3
Motor vehicle insurance(1)	908.148	-	-	-	-	-
Medical care	670.989	-	662.905	6.0	-1.2	-
Recreation(3)	125.859	-	125.184	-3.6	-0.5	-
Education and communication(3)	114.680	-	115.179	-0.2	0.4	-
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(1) ..	760.757	-	761.218	1.7	0.1	-
Other goods and services	368.236	-	372.133	2.8	1.1	-
Commodity and service group						
All items	226.984	-	228.343	0.3	0.6	-
Commodities	183.599	-	185.793	0.7	1.2	-
Commodities less food & beverages	161.196	-	164.411	-1.9	2.0	-
Nondurables less food & beverages	198.663	-	200.954	-6.9	1.2	-
Durables	127.861	-	131.503	-	2.8	-
Services	264.312	-	264.865	0.1	0.2	-

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods Urban Alaska (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020	Oct. 2020	Oct. 2019	Aug. 2020	Sep. 2020
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	211.764	-	213.409	-0.2	0.8	-
All items less shelter.....	236.809	-	238.907	0.8	0.9	-
Commodities less food	161.045	-	164.334	-2.0	2.0	-
Nondurables	214.745	-	215.835	-0.4	0.5	-
Nondurables less food.....	195.427	-	198.016	-6.5	1.3	-
Services less rent of shelter(2).....	364.644	-	366.375	0.8	0.5	-
Services less medical care services.....	240.618	-	241.546	-0.9	0.4	-
Energy	265.438	266.247	273.129	-9.8	2.9	2.6
All items less energy	225.098	-	226.083	1.2	0.4	-
All items less food and energy	223.584	-	224.835	0.3	0.6	-

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a December 1978=100 base.

(2) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(3) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(4) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(5) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

- Data not available

NOTE: Index applies to a month as a whole, not to any specific date.